

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
OF THE CITY OF PLATTSBURGH, NEW YORK**

October 11, 2012

**5:30 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Mayor Donald Kasprzak, Councilors Tim Carpenter (W1), Mark Tiffer (W2), George Rabideau (W3), Jim Calnon (W4), Chris Case (W5), Chris Jackson (W6)

**Absent:** None

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**1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the regular meeting of the Common Council held on October 4, 2012 are approved and placed on file among the public records of the City Clerk's Office.

By Councilor Carpenter; Seconded by Councilor Tiffer

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Tiffer, Rabideau, Calnon, Case, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

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**2. PAYROLLS OF VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS:**

**RESOLVED:** That the payrolls of the various Departments of the City of Plattsburgh for the week ending October 10, 2012 in the amount of \$ 257,868.98 are authorized and allowed and Mayor and the City Clerk are hereby empowered and directed to sign warrants drawn on the City Chamberlain for the payment thereof.

By Councilor Carpenter; Seconded by Councilor Jackson

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Tiffer, Rabideau, Calnon, Case, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

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**3. REPORTS OF CITY OFFICES & COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- Report of Fire and Ambulance Responses for the week of October 4 – October 10, 2012
- Report from the Building Inspector's Office from October 3 – October 6, 2012
- Statements of cash receipts from the Library from September 19 – September 25, 2012

**RESOLVED:** That the reports as listed are hereby ordered, received and placed on file among the public records of the City Clerk's Office.

By Councilor Carpenter; Seconded by Councilor Calnon

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Tiffer, Rabideau, Calnon, Case, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

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**4. CORRESPONDENCE & RECOMMENDATIONS FROM BOARDS: None**

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**5. AUDIT OF CLAIMS:**

**RESOLVED:** That the bills Audited by the Common Council in the amount of \$ 1,212,042.25 are authorized and allowed and the Mayor and City Clerk (where required) are hereby authorized and directed to sign warrants drawn on the City Chamberlain for the payment thereof.

By Councilor Rabideau; Seconded by Councilor Carpenter  
Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Tiffer, Rabideau, Calnon, Case, Jackson  
(All voted in the affirmative)

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**6. PERSONS ADDRESSING COUNCIL:**

**Chris Bleaux, President AFSCME Union** said we are here today to represent the largest union who works for the city. AFSCME as most of you know is a diversified unit bar none. If you belong to AFSCME you could work in the financial section, you could work in the water treatment plant, you could work at the water pollution control plant, and you could be a secretary or design the infrastructure in the City of Plattsburgh. You could be involved in the garbage collection, vehicle maintenance, maintain our city in numerous ways that involve titles from maintenance workers to mechanics to laborers. On a given day we could be installing one of the city's many docks that we now have, put a stage together for a show, get a call at 2 am or 2pm to repair a water main break because we do maintain miles of water and sewer mains. We also manage and work a largely expanded recreation department. You're about to make up your minds in the next few days on an imposed contract for the years 2009 to 2010. When the imposed contract is done I'm assuming that's the way we are going to go. We go back in to negotiations and it's my hope that takes place as soon as possible to come to an end on this. The city AFSCME contract remains intact. What you'll decide is a wage adjustment for these people mentioned. There was a fact finding report issue which was voted down by this unit. This decisive vote of 47-21 and the reason for it was the substantial change in insurance co-pays into retirement. And up to that point had never been part of the process of negotiations it was just too much. This unit however was given and will continue to be part of the solution if given the chance. It's been 3 years and 4 months without any wage adjustments while gas prices, rent, food prices soar. It's getting tougher for all of us. I would also like to say that after 28 years of employment here in the city I have never seen morale so low and that's the honest to god's truth. There are people that have been working for this city for the last 10 years that haven't been able to take their family on a vacation. The fact finder recommended a percent and a half for '09. In our talks between the Mayor and myself we talked about the possibility of a percent and a half in '09 as well. The Town of Plattsburgh in yesterday's paper I believe it was settled for 2.8. I respectfully ask on behalf of AFSCME that you do not assign a zero for this unit. And this imposed contract for all the reasons I mentioned above that you would consider at least a percent and a half for this unit.

**Jason Keable, Vice President AFSCME Union** said the AFSCME Union represents the largest work force in the City of Plattsburgh. The men and women of this union also provide the widest range of functions and services for this city. As Chris said, garbage/recycling pickup, water filtration, sewer treatment, fire hydrant maintenance, street and sidewalk repair, parks and recreation's that our children enjoy. We have a lot of clerical staff. We provide emergency services such as snowplowing, water main break repair. We're responsible for the success of city events such as Mayor's Cup, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Battle of Plattsburgh, Fishing

Tournaments. These men and women have provided excellent service to the city and have done so for the last 3 ½ years without any kind of wage adjustment whatsoever. I can stand before you like Chris did and tell you morale is at an all-time low with these workers. Times are tough, the economies different we understand it the hardships that the city's endured but it's also endured by the employees and the citizens of the city. We do love, respect and honor our city. Work very hard to ensure its success and its growth. We hope the city feels the same way about us. I ask you today to consider a small but fair wage increase for these workers.

**Laverne Hicks** 9 Alex Way said Mr. Tiffer I sent you a letter did you get it?

**Councilor Tiffer** said no. By mail?

**Laverne Hicks** 9 Alex Way said I mailed it. Well I'll tell you what it says. It said that I would like you to show me in black and white with figures exactly how Bombardier has advantage the city and how Bombardier has taken advantage of the city taxpayers. That I would like you to show me in black and white I'll be here next week so you can do that, ok.

**Mayor Kasprzak** said excuse me, Laverne, he doesn't have to answer you next week on that publicly. He can answer your letter.

**Laverne Hicks** 9 Alex Way said he can answer my letter but he said he didn't get it. If he doesn't answer my letter I'll be here next week.

**Mayor Kasprzak** said that's fine you're welcome. But I'm just telling you there won't be any dialogue about that next week.

**Laverne Hicks** 9 Alex Way said maybe not between him and I, out there. I am challenging the City of Plattsburgh to show me in black and white where they zoned industry. There's three things that take in zoning one is public notification, a certified letter to each household in the area and a public hearing. None of those were ever sent out. If they have we didn't get one and I challenge the city to show me where they did. I guess some of you came up around our place and looked at the area. And somebody made a comment it was very quiet up there. Of course it was quiet the Governor came! I mean what do you expect? When we went on a tour they were skeleton crew. They didn't want any noise. Come up there at 2 o'clock in the morning; come up there at 4:30 in the morning listen to those train whistles. {pointing to Councilor Carpenter} I'm sure you can hear them at your house!

**Councilor Carpenter** said oh yeah I can hear that and I can hear the trucks unloading over at Imperial.

**Laverne Hicks** 9 Alex Way said there you go and you know what Imperial has? Most of its Bombardier, ok. Mr. LoTempio, I do not live across the street from Bombardier. Bombardier is in my back yard. They are 110 feet from me. I ask you to get that straight in your news maybe the next one you have you'll get that right.

**Ernie Gillespie** 89 Main Mill St said my concern with the Council here is the lack of it seems of what the residents are going through in the area. Mr. Calnon is the only one that showed any kind of concern last week. The rest of you just played up Bombardier like they're god and they're not! They've got contracts

right now. They wouldn't even be in Plattsburgh if it wasn't New York State law. They have to be there to make those subway cars for New York City. That's the only reason why they're here. Otherwise, they never would have left Vermont. 7 to 10 years you're probably going to be left with a big empty building big white elephant sitting there. Have some concerns for the residents that are in that area. I didn't see any other than, again Mr. Calnon, the rest it didn't seem to matter to you. Some of you didn't say anything. Some of you's did. Maybe the city, Bombardier and the neighbor's maybe we can have a meeting and discuss things. I haven't seen nothing about that so I'm throwing that out there.

**Harold Hicks** 9 Alex Way said I have worked for the City of Plattsburgh since 1961 or 2. I started out down on Green Street under Frank Bin. We went over to Public Works where the Police Department is now. 67 around that area of time we moved up to Harry Alford's Barn and property on Main Mill Street. We were looking at our home to purchase we had rent with options to buy. I work for the city for 36 years. I set in that chair, right there. I can remember topics coming before this council. One of them being Durkee Street property, Steve Baker's property. I remember telling the Mayor at the time. You can't do this you can't take this man's right of way and his property he's been there for 30 years he's paid taxes for 30 years. Well guess what they did. Clyde wanted that parking lot because he had an eatery across the street so they stole 12 feet of Steve Baker's property. Anybody that wants to go down check you will see the marks the white paint all the way to the river. They've never made any kind of adjustment. The city parking lot is still there and Steve is still minus his property. I see the same thing happening to my property to Ernie's property. We've been put in to a squeeze here. This is the reason we can't sit by and be squeezed anymore. The noise is terrible nobody cares. You gentlemen don't care, you gentlemen don't care. It's not in your backyard. What price for jobs? Is it 5 million dollars a job? Is it 2 million dollars? 1 million dollars? We're paying an awful lot for jobs in the community. Do we need them? Yeah we do. I can't see anyone treating the taxpayers the way the taxpayers on Main Mill Street has been treated. And you talk about hundreds and hundreds of jobs it's not so! There's a lot of jobs outside of this city. But the jobs for the residents in the city there not there. City of Plattsburgh gave up Public Works we didn't even have a Public Works department afterwards. We had a brand new salt shed \$500,000 it was throwed in with the deal when out and they tore it down. Are we still leasing property over on the base or do we own that now? But these are the points I'm trying to make. What price for a job?

**Jake Navatka** a Plattsburgh State student said I'm here for a class taught by Professor Mandeville I understand he knows many of you. I have to attend 2 different meetings. Here and the Clinton County Legislature. I'm curious and just wanted to quickly ask what ways do these 2 bodies coordinate with each other and how your duties are different.

**Mayor Kasprzak** said Jake this is a portion, tonight's a little unusual about talking with folks that are speaking, but we normally don't do that. I'd be glad to answer your questions anytime in my office if you want to call Beth. I would tell you what I think the differences are. Real quickly we handle different issues we are more open to people coming publicly to talk to us. They don't have a lot of people normally that do that; I'm not saying that's by design. And then there is a whole host of other different County issues versus City. But, I'll be glad to let you know that if you want to either talk to me, email me or meet with me and we can discuss that for you.

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## **7. OTHER ITEMS:**

**A. RESOLVED:** In accordance with the request therefore the Common Council approves a Change Order in the amount of \$2,600 to Project HOME-18-2009 “Stone – 27 St. John’s Street.”

By Councilor Tiffer; Seconded by Councilor Carpenter

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Tiffer, Rabideau, Calnon, Case, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow up Action: None

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**B. RESOLVED:** In accordance with the request therefore the Common Council approves the Community Development Office to advertise for bids for Housing Rehab “Shaffer – 10 Kim Court.”

By Councilor Tiffer; Seconded by Councilor Carpenter

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Tiffer, Rabideau, Calnon, Case, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow up Action: None

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**C. RESOLVED:** In accordance with the request therefore the Common Council approves a design services agreement with Stantec Consulting Services Inc. to complete subsurface explorations and to provide geotechnical engineering services for the proposed slope stabilization project located at the Old Base Marina access along Oklahoma Avenue. The slope became unstable during the 2011 flooding. Funding for the repair of damages has been authorized by FEMA (PW # PA-02-NY-1993-01852(0) as shown on the attached FEMA Project Grant Report.

By Councilor Tiffer; Seconded by Councilor Calnon

Discussion:

**Councilor Carpenter** said is this where the bridge is that the railroad wants to move?

**Mayor Kasprzak** said yes.

**Councilor Carpenter** said and do we know if they’re actually going to actually take it out or replace it yet?

**Mayor Kasprzak** said no we don’t.

**Councilor Carpenter** said is there a chance that we could approve this and then they take that bridge out and we actually can’t possibly do the work?

**Mayor Kasprzak** said absolutely.

**Councilor Calnon** said sure.

**Councilor Carpenter** said and if we don't approve it do we lose the funding?

**Mayor Kasprzak** said we have the funding.

**Councilor Calnon** said yeah but if we don't approve the contract then I mean payments work on a reimbursement basis. So if we don't spend it we are not going to get reimbursed for it. It's zero impact on us local dollars. The point being if they move the bridge or if they don't move the bridge the only way we will have access to that is if we stabilize that slope. Now we may have to stabilize it differently if we have a bridge that is a foot and a half higher.

**Councilor Carpenter** said my worry is that they decide they're not going to replace the bridge because of cost and then how are we going to get anything over there to actually do the stabilization.

**Councilor Tiffer** said we would have to go by land across the tracks.

**Mayor Kasprzak** said we would have to receive permission from the railroad to go across which they don't normally do and this whole situation is pretty well screwed up quite frankly. So I don't have an answer for you because the railroad, for those out here, is considering raising the bridge there. They haven't made a decision. This funding is to help us stabilize because of the flooding a portion of the other side of the bridge. I don't have an answer what the railroads going to do nobody does they probably don't know. If they don't get what they want as far as concessions or assistance with the bridge assistance in helping them pay for repairs they're likely to do what they choose to do.

**Councilor Calnon** said it still may not be really a waste of time because even if access is only from the water or from somewhere else since we have the gazebo up the hill that would be unusable because that's part of the slope that needs to be fixed. So I think we should probably fix this regardless of what the railroad is going to do because people are going to make their way over there.

**Mayor Kasprzak** said I think there are long term safety issues regardless whether the bridge is there or not because they will eventually come there by water because that spots been utilized for years.

**Councilor Carpenter** said I agree with you. I guess my worry is they decide to take that they're going to take that bridge out before we have a chance to fix it.

**Mayor Kasprzak** said I don't think they want to do that. They should first talk to everybody before they decide to remove anything and hopefully they will do that.

**Councilor Case** said are they easy to communicate with.

**Mayor Kasprzak** said it's not an issue at this point but your concern is valid.

**Councilor Tiffer** said since we are having a discussion on it. I'm just happy to see that we're finally moving along with this. It took a long time for FEMA to approve this project even though the flooding was 16, 17 months ago. So I'm happy to see that this moving along. People use it also there is barricades people are on the other side of the barricades. So the fact that we're working toward

making it a safer place people are going use it.

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Tiffer, Rabideau, Calnon, Case, Jackson  
(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow up Action: None

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**D. RESOLVED:** In accordance with the request therefore the Common Council approves PMLD Bid No. 2012-8-3 “Utility Wood Poles” be awarded to Cox Industries in the total amount of \$10,275.10.

By Councilor Jackson; Seconded by Councilor Carpenter

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Tiffer, Rabideau, Calnon, Case, Jackson  
(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow up Action: None

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**8. TRAVEL REQUEST: None**

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**9. RESOLUTIONS FOR INITIAL CONSIDERATION:**

1. Request from Mayor Kasprzak to attend the NYCOM Executive Committee and Legislative Priorities Meeting in Albany, NY from November 18-19, 2012 at an estimated cost not to exceed \$500.
2. Request from Bill Treacy Manager MLD that PMLD Bid No. 2012-8-2 “St. Lawrence 1 and St. Lawrence 2 Substation Upgrades – Testing and Commissioning” be awarded to O’Connell Electric Company in the total amount of \$85,000.
3. Request from Mayor Kasprzak to resolve the impasse in negotiations between the City and AFSCME Council 66, Local 788 by legislative determination as permitted by the NYS Civil Service Law. A Public meeting will be held on Thursday, November 1, 2012 at 5pm in the Common Council Chambers, 41 City Hall Place, Plattsburgh, NY 12901.
4. Request from Bill Treacy Manager MLD for Kelly Clookey to attend the “MEUA Accounting and Finance Workshop” in East Syracuse, NY on November 14-16, 2012 at a cost not to exceed \$730.

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**10. NEW BUSINESS: None**

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**11. CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Laverne Hicks** 9 Alex Way said back in 1996 if you will look at the Zoning Board minutes 12/23/96 you

will see that Bombardier said there first shift when they put that second extension up they would have almost 500 people working the first shift they would have a total of almost 700 people. Now they are saying there only going to have 400 and some people. Who's the liar?

Motion to Adjourn by Councilor Jackson; Seconded by Councilor Tiffer

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Tiffer, Rabideau, Calnon, Case, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**MEETING ADJOURNED:** 6:00 pm